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ABSTRACT

The Training Opportunities Program (TOP), a work experience and training program for New York City high school students, is designed to place students, as trainees, in agencies and businesses with equipment, facilities, and human resources not available in the public schools. In 1983-84, the third year of the program's operation, TOP was funded to serve 2,000 students. TOP has operated a special education component from its inception in 1982-82; this component operates from the Placement and Referral Center for the Handicapped of the Division of Special Education. The program is administered by donated staff from the Placement and Referral Center. The special education component served 255 students in 1983-84. In May, 1984, the program had 174 active trainees at 96 training sites. The 1983-84 evaluation consisted of a descriptive analysis of the special education component, in-person interviews with TOP staff and special education trainees, and telephone interviews with training site supervisors (employers). The majority of the respondents were supportive of the program and had positive attitudes about its activities and outcomes. All of the trainees said they benefitted from participating in the program and cited the practical work experience, new skills, and job seeking strategies learned as major benefits. Eighty-one percent of the supervisors said their agencies would participate in the program next year and cited the trainee stipend, paid by TOP, and the mutual benefits gained by both students and employers as the primary reasons for their continued involvement in the program. (Author/CL)]

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TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM
SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPONENT
1983-84

OEA Evaluation Report

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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

October, 1985

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TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM
SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPONENT
1983-84

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THE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM
SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPONENT, 1983-84

EVALUATION SUMMARY

The Training Opportunities Program is a work experience and training program for New York City high school students. The goal of the program is to place students, as trainees, in agencies and businesses with equipment, facilities, and human resources not available in the public schools. In 1983-84, the third year of the program's operation, the Training Opportunities Program was funded to serve 2,000 students.

The Training Opportunities Program has operated a special education component from its inception in 1981-82. The special education component operates from the Placement and Referral Center for the Handicapped of the Division of Special Education. The program is administered by donated staff from the Placement and Referral Center.

The special education component served 255 students in 1983-84. In May, 1984, the program had 174 active trainees at 96 training sites. The 1983-84 evaluation consisted of a descriptive analysis of the special education component, in-person interviews with TOP staff and special education trainees, and telephone interviews with training site supervisors (employers).

The majority of the respondents were supportive of the program and had positive attitudes about its activities and outcomes. All of the trainees said they benefitted from participating in the program and cited the practical work experience, new skills, and job seeking strategies learned as major benefits. Eighty-one percent of the supervisors said their agencies would participate in the program next year and cited the trainee stipend, paid by TOP, and the mutual benefits gained by both students and employers as the primary reasons for their continued involvement in the program.

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I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

THE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

The Training Opportunities Program (TOP) is an occupational training program for New York City high school students. The program is administered by the Work Experience and Training Unit (W.E.T.U.) of the Division of High Schools and funded through a tax-levy allocation from the New York City Council. In 1983-84, the third year of the program's operation, TOP was funded for \$2,545,786 to serve 2,000 students.

TOP trainees are placed in businesses and agencies with facilities, equipment, and human resources not available in the public schools. The development of training placements in the following 15 occupational areas is a major program priority.

Automotive Diagnostics
Computer Maintenance/Repair
Construction Technology
Drafting
Environmental Technology
Fashion Textiles Industry
Graphics/Communications
Health

Machine Tool Technology
Medical Equipment Repair
Optical Dispensing Technology
Plastics Technology
Security Systems Technology
Telecommunications
Word Processing/Micro-Processing

TOP trainees spend up to 15 hours per week at their placement sites and are paid at the minimum wage. The program pays 100 percent of trainee wages at public and private non-profit sites and 50 percent of trainee wages at private-for-profit placements. Most trainees work after school, but a number are on cooperative education-type schedules and alternate a full week at the placement site with a full week at school.

TOP has served special education students since its inception. The special education component is operated by the Placement and Referral Center for the Handicapped of the Division of Special Education.

THE PLACEMENT AND REFERRAL CENTER FOR THE HANDICAPPED

The Placement and Referral Center for the Handicapped (hereafter referred to as to the Center) was established in 1971 to provide employment services to handicapped New York City residents ages 16 and older. The Center provides job preparation and placement services, referrals to other agencies, and college admissions assistance. The Center's operations are funded by a number of sources which include tax-levy revenues, as well as various reimbursable programs.

The Goal of the Center

The primary goal of the Center is to place qualified handicapped clients in appropriate, paid, full- or part-time employment. One of the major principles of the Center's philosophy is that handicapped persons are able to contribute to society as productive and independent workers. The Center strives to reduce the unemployment and underemployment of the handicapped through the operation of various activities and projects.

Service Objectives

The Center has eight major service objectives. They are:

1. To identify and pre-screen job ready applicants, ages 16 and older for full-time and part-time employment.
2. To conduct job adjustment skills classes for the Center's clients.
3. To educate employers about the benefits of hiring the handicapped and the availability of reimbursable on-the-job training programs.
4. To develop appropriate openings in competitive (paid) employment and job training programs.

5. To provide intensive post-job placement follow-up to support the retention of Center clients at job sites.
6. To implement voluntary work experience programs for secondary school clients.
7. To conduct workshops which increase the sensitivity of parents, teachers, and other public and private sector personnel to the needs of the handicapped.
8. To assist employers in the preparation and interpretation of affirmative action plans.

Center Activities

In 1982-83, the Center provided services to over 600 high school age youth and 600 adult clients (persons who have completed or who are no longer enrolled in high school are classified as adult clients). The Center's clients are identified and referred through the Division of Special Education's data bank, administrators and teachers in New York City Schools, area employment and training agencies and programs, the New York State Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, practicing medical and health professionals, and various advocacy and interest groups for the handicapped.

The Center uses annual mailings of materials and brochures, telephone contacts, presentations, meetings with employers at business events, radio, television, newspapers, and general meetings to educate the community about the capabilities of the handicapped. School districts, parent groups, and agencies serving the handicapped are also made aware of the Center's programs and services.

Pre-Screening Clients. The pre-screening process includes the compilation of social, medical, vocational, and educational information into a comprehensive history. Other pre-screening activities involve the completion of a job application to obtain a current personal and work history, the completion of a battery of assessment tests, and an interview with one of the Center's

staff members. The Center uses a variety of assessment tests to measure some of the skills and aptitudes necessary for success in the world of work. Clients receive the SET-Clerical and the SET-Math tests. The SET-Clerical test measures business skills such as those required by alpha-numerical file clerks and the SET-Math test measures higher level math skills such as those required for bank teller positions. Both of the SET tests are produced by the Psychological Corporation and are frequently used in business and industry personnel offices.

Another math test, which resembles the Chock Full O'Nuts Corporation Math Test, is also used at the Center. This test measures simple math skills such as those required for cashier positions. Two other short tests, which were developed by the Center staff to measure filing and messenger skills, are also included in the pre-screening battery. Clients who indicate that they have had some typing experience or training are given a standardized typing test.

New clients are also given the opportunity to use the computerized Metroguide system, which uses the results of an interest inventory to identify occupational areas for which the client might be suited. An interview with a Center staff member is the final prescreening activity which involves the client. All of the Center's clients are interviewed and the interviews are often lengthy, particularly for the out-of-school adult clients. The objective of the interviews is to obtain a thorough personal and work history that does not have any unexplained gaps. The next step in the process for the staff is the verification and clarification of information that was obtained during the interview. Other agencies of programs with

which the client is involved are then notified that the client has registered and is being pre-screened by the Placement and Referral Center. During the final step in the process, the information obtained from the pre-screening is analyzed and a decision is made regarding which of the services provided by the Center would best meet the client's needs.

Services to Clients. After pre-screening, clients are classified into one of four service system options. They are: (1) competitive (paid) employment, (2) voluntary employment, (3) a job training program, and (4) pre-employment skills training.

Job ready clients, who are classified for competitive employment are given assistance in areas such as preparing resumes and learning effective job interview techniques. Staff attempt to match the client with one of the available job slots developed by the Center or registered by a cooperating employer. A client who cannot be matched to an available job is placed on a waiting list until an appropriate job is developed or registered.

Center staff estimated that approximately 100 of the 1983-84 adult clients were awaiting placement. These clients were job ready, but capable of performing in only low level jobs, so remain on the waiting list until suitable jobs emerge.

High school age clients whose ability and functioning are at a low level and who are enrolled in Occupational Training Centers may be assigned to the voluntary employment program. This program combines education and work experience activities to prepare students for employment.

Four New York City hospitals are used as the voluntary employment sites. They are: (1) The Metropolitan Jewish Geriatric Center in Brooklyn,

(2) Jacobi Hospital in the Bronx, (3) the Jewish Home and Hospital for the Aged in Manhattan, and (4) Bayley Seton Hospital in Staten Island. Program activities vary according to student needs. Some students spend part of the day at the hospital and part of the day at the Occupational Training Center (O.T.C.), while others spend the entire day at the hospital site where Occupational Training Center staff conduct classes. All of the hospital sites are supervised by Center staff. The voluntary program does not enroll adult clients.

Placement in a stipend earning job training program is another option available to qualified high school clients. At present, TOP is the only stipend earning project in operation at the Center.

Both high school age and adult clients are provided pre-employment skills training. The Center uses a commercially developed instructional program called the Adkins Life Skills Program Employability Skills Series. The Adkins program consists of ten units (or modules) which are designed to teach educationally disadvantaged adolescents and adults how to locate, obtain, and keep a job. The Adkins series uses audio, video, and print materials in an integrated instructional and counseling approach. The Adkins Life Skills series training is offered throughout the year in ten week cycles. All of the pre-employment training participants receive some Adkins instruction, depending on their needs. Some clients are given the complete ten unit series, while others receive a modified program of selected units.

Placement and Referral Center Staff

The Center has 24 staff members, including ten paraprofessionals, 13 teacher level trainer/counselor/job developers, and one administrator. There is no clerical/secretarial support staff.

1983-84 Service Statistics

In 1983-84, the Center provided services to 624 high school age clients (See Appendix A) and 643 adult clients (see Table 1). The Center staff placed approximately 16 percent of the high school clients and 28 percent of the adult clients in competitive (paid) employment. Twenty-six percent of the adult clients and 33 percent of the high school clients received pre-employment skills training. Of the 294 adult clients who were not placed in jobs or scheduled for Adkins training, approximately 100 were remanded to the waiting list for jobs. The other 194 adults were referred to other agencies and programs, medical assistance, job training or other services.

Nearly ten percent of the high school clients were assigned to the voluntary employment program. An additional 44 percent of the high school age clients were enrolled in the TOP special education component for stipend-earning work experience and training.

THE TOP SPECIAL EDUCATION COMPONENT

The regular TOP program was modified to meet the needs of special education students. The special education component operates somewhat autonomously in relation to the rest of the program and the staff feel that the flexibility this arrangement gives them is essential. Special education students often need more than one year of work experience as well as a stipend of allowance because they need to earn money. As a result, special education trainees, unlike regular TOP trainees, may spend a number of years in the program. The staff estimates that about half (130 of 255 students) who were processed in 1983-84 were holdovers from the prior year.

Many of the occupational areas and training categories developed for students in the regular TOP sites are not suitable for special education

Table 1

Number and Percentage of High School and Adult Clients
Placed in Different Service System Options by
Placement and Referral Center for the Handicapped

Service System Option	High School Clients	Adult Clients
Pre-Employment Skills Training	205 (33%)	168 (26%)
Job Training Programs	255 (41%)	0
Voluntary Employment Program	61 (10%)	0
Competitive (Paid) Employment	103 (16%)	181 (28%)
Other	0	294* (46%)
TOTAL	624 (100%)	643 (100%)

* Includes approximately 100 adult clients on the waiting list for jobs, and adults referred to other agencies and programs for medical assistance, employment and training programs and other services.

° Eighty-four percent of the High School Clients received either Pre-Employment Skills Training, Job Training Programs, or the Voluntary Employment Program as compared to 26 percent of the Adult clients.

trainees, so the special education component was integrated into the operations of the Placement and Referral Center. The major goal of the TOP Special Education Component (T.S.E.C.), is to place trainees in competitive employment. T.S.E.C. is considered one in a series of education, training, and work experiences that may also include voluntary employment and specific occupational training.

In 1983-84, T.S.E.C. was in its third year of operation. The component served 255 students in 1983-84 (see Table 2) and as of May 15, 1984, had 174 active trainees at 96 placement sites. The 174 trainees who were participating in T.S.E.C. at that time were enrolled at 78 New York City high schools, alternative schools or training and development centers (see Appendix A).

Training Sites

Sixty-three percent of the 1983-84 placement sites were in public sector agencies and organizations and approximately 35 percent were in the private non-profit sector. Only two sites (two percent) were in private-for-profit firms. According to the T.S.E.C. coordinator, private sector employers are discouraged from participating in the program because of the complexities of the employer agreement (contract) and the excessive paperwork associated with activities such as payroll processing.

Table 3 presents a profile of T.S.E.C. training sites. Twenty-four percent of the placement sites were at offices or projects that are part of New York City Board of Education operations. An additional 25 percent of the sites were public and private non-profit hospitals. Seventeen percent of the sites were at public and private non-profit human services agencies or projects.

Table 2
Number and Percentage of 1983-84 TOP
Special Education Component Students
Receiving Full Year Placements or Terminations.

Disposition	Number of Students	Percent of Students
Full Year Placements	174	68
Terminated at One Site, Reassigned to Another	11	4
Terminated From Program	70	28
TOTAL	255	100%

* See Table Six

° Two-thirds of T.S.E.C. students received full-year placements.

Table 3
Profile of 1983-84 TOP Special Education Training Sites

Occupational Area	Public or Private Non-Profit	Private For Profit	TOTAL
Business/Manufacturing	0	2	2 (2%)
Educational Services Board of Education	24	0	24 (25%)
Educational Services College/University	5	0	5 (5%)
Health Services	7	0	7 (7%)
Hospital Services	24	0	24 (25%)
Horticultural/ Agricultural Services	4	0	4 (4%)
Human Services	16	0	16 (17%)
Office Services	10	0	10 (11%)
Recreational Services	4	0	4 (4%)
	----	----	----
TOTAL	94	2	96 (100%)

° Almost all T.S.E.C. students are placed in public or private non-profit training sites.

° Half the placements were in the occupational areas of educational or health services.

TOP Special Education Component Staff

The T.S.E.C. operations are conducted by a coordinator and two paraprofessionals who are paid through the Placement and Referral Center's budget.

The duties of the T.S.E.C. coordinator, who is responsible for the overall management of the program, include: (1) recruiting, assessing, selecting, and placing trainees, (2) recruiting new employers (placement sites), (3) monitoring trainee progress and problems at the school and training site, (4) monitoring employer compliance to program requirements, and (5) compiling records and reports for payroll processing and program documentation. (See Appendix B for a description of the job responsibilities of TOP coordinators.)

The two paraprofessional staff members are responsible for: (1) assisting in the completion of clerical work, (2) monitoring selected training sites, and (3) working with students regarding progress or problems at the training site.

Recruitment of TOP Trainees

The T.S.E.C. uses an existing network of public schools staff to recruit new applicants. Potential trainees are referred to the program through one of the following three sources: (1) school-based liaison teachers or other staff, (2) special education supervisors and counselors, or (3) the TOP coordinator, in collaboration with Placement and Referral Center staff. All of the referral sources use a modified version of the standard TOP eligibility criteria to identify new applicants. The eligibility criteria for regular TOP students include that:

1. Participants should be juniors or seniors in high school.
2. Participants should be 16 years or older.

3. Participants should have a good attendance record and an overall passing average in vocational/occupational programs.
4. Priority will be given to those participants currently enrolled in a vocational program which matches one of the 15 priority occupational areas.
5. Participants should have flexible school schedules to allow for release, if necessary.
6. Participants should meet eligibility and skill criteria specified by the training site.
7. Participants not currently enrolled in a vocational program, but who demonstrate an interest in one of the TOP occupational areas should be considered.

The T.S.E.C. seeks to recruit minimally job ready youth, who need work experience and do not have any recurring or chronic health problems that would interfere with their participation in the program. Very few special education students are enrolled in vocational schools, so the fourth TOP eligibility criterion is not applied to new applicants.

Screening and Selection

Applicants are screened and selected by the T.S.E.C. coordinator. The screening process consists of: (1) a review of the applicant's background, including school records, (2) consultations with teachers and the applicant's special education counselor, (3) the administration of appropriate assessment tests (e.g., SET Math, Clerical, Messenger, Typing), and (4) an interview with the T.S.E.C. coordinator. The staff also evaluates the applicants' attitudes and behavior to identify the applicants who would be likely to encounter problems in the work setting. The T.S.E.C. coordinator works closely with each applicant's special education teacher and counselor during the screening process. The special education teachers and counselors are considered to be

the most knowledgeable resource persons available regarding the capabilities of the students, so their input is highly valued. After an applicant is classified as suitable for training the matching process begins.

Matching and Placement

The T.S.E.C. coordinator is responsible for all matching and placement. The coordinator reviews the results of the screening process and the types of training placements that are available, completes payroll processing documents, and schedules the trainees for limited employability skills training. All new trainees receive an orientation to program objectives and payroll procedures. When staff feel it is appropriate, selected trainees are given the Adkins Life Skills unit, "Keeping Your Job".

This Adkins unit uses video, audio, and print materials to help trainees: (1) identify and cope with specific job related problems that could result in job loss, (2) use a problem solving approach to effectively cope with job related problems, and (3) identify and learn good work habits that will enable the trainee to avoid or reduce job related problems. The content of the unit focuses on helping trainees manage their time on the job, relate positively to authority, get along with co-workers, adjust and get involved in the new work site, and properly handle possible mistakes on the job.

The coordinator also schedules trainees for interviews with prospective employers who are considered a good match for the trainees' capabilities and work experience needs. Trainees are given information about the company or agency and the available position. They are also advised about how to be effective in a job interview. The decision to hire the trainee rests with the employer.

The T.S.E.C. staff feel that they understand the capabilities, strengths, and preferences of the employers and site supervisors and use this knowledge to match trainees who need more nurturing and attention to appropriate sites. A number of employers have been with the program since it began and understand how important the actual work experience is to the growth and development of special education students.

Training Plans

All TOP trainees have written training plans that list the training related skills that will be taught at the school, by the employer at the placement site, or learned by trainees on their own. The training plans for regular TOP trainees are prepared by TOP central office staff and usually developed directly from job descriptions of adult occupational classifications such as those described in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles. The pre-developed training plans frequently do not accurately describe the actual training experience, so they are revised by employers and TOP school coordinators.

The standard TOP training plans for regular students are often unrealistic for special education trainees. The T.S.E.C. coordinator and participating employers have jointly developed training plans that reflect the capabilities of the trainees, the actual job tasks that will be performed, and the skills the trainee will acquire. The coordinator keeps a copy of all training plans on file at the program office and gives a copy to the employer. When job tasks change, the training plans are revised.

Monitoring

The T.S.E.C. coordinator makes site visits to employers as needed, but sees

each employer a minimum of once a year. Program staff are in telephone contact with employers a minimum of twice a month or more frequently if the need arises. When problems occur, contact between employers and staff is made on a daily basis. According to the T.S.E.C. coordinator, employers prefer to deal with the program staff over the telephone.

The staff use a network of concerned people to monitor the progress or problems of trainees at school and at the work sites. Interested teachers, special education counselors, employers, and parents are all involved in a coordinated effort to make the trainees' work experience a positive one. When a school or work site problem arises, if trainee attitudes become negative, or trainee behavior changes, the people in the network become actively involved in the resolution of the difficulty. According to the coordinator, this network of "demonstrated caring" has made a considerable difference: trainees have become more open and responsive.

The coordinator and paraprofessional staff meet with trainees every two weeks. T.S.E.C. trainees pick up their bi-weekly paychecks at the office and the staff use the paydays as an opportunity to conduct a review of student progress at school and on the job, discuss specific concerns, and reinforce good work attitudes and habits. When specific problems arise, the contacts with trainees become more frequent and occur as often as every day.

Trainee Evaluation. T.S.E.C. trainees are evaluated by their employers twice a year (mid- and end-of-year). The trainees' work site supervisors complete an evaluation form that uses a five-point scale to rank trainees on five attitude and five performance variables. Supervisors are also asked to list the skills mastered by the trainee during the time period covered in the evaluation (see Appendix C).

Record Keeping. The T.S.E.C. office maintains a site folder for each employer that contains copies of:

1. The training agreement (contract);
2. The training plans of all trainees at the site;
3. A listing of the name, school counselor, job start date, and job tasks of all trainees at the site;
4. Payroll records of all trainees at the site;
5. Monitoring reports (record of site visits); and
6. Correspondence between the program and employer.

In addition to the site folder, the office maintains a student folder for each trainee that contains copies of:

1. A completed parent permission form;
2. The placement data form (summary of trainee background, assessment scores, work history, handicapping condition, limitations, etc.);
3. The job card;
4. Employer evaluation reports; and
5. Case notes (record of date, purpose, and type of contact or action taken on client's behalf).

The student folder may also contain: (1) payroll approval documents, (2) a copy of the trainee's social security card, (3) a doctor's note certifying the student's eligibility for employment, and (4) copies of correspondence relating to the trainee.

TOP Special Education Trainees

The T.S.E.C. served students in all of the handicapped classifications (see Table 4). Brain Injured, Emotionally Handicapped, Hard of Hearing,

Learning Disabled and Mentally Retarded were the classifications with the largest number of trainees. These five classifications contained 85 percent of the 1983-84 enrollment. The mean age of the trainees was 18.3 years. Of these five classifications the mentally retarded group, who averaged 19.2 years of age were the oldest. Forty percent of the students in the five classifications were under 18 years of age.

TOP special education trainees were placed in jobs in nine training areas. Table 5 presents information about trainees' job placement according to handicapping condition. The largest cluster of trainees were in office services as either clerical or office aides. Sixty-four percent (9) of the emotionally handicapped, 57 percent (11) of the brain injured, and 49 percent (14) of the learning disabled students were placed in office services.

Seventy students were terminated in 1983-84 (see Table 6). Twenty-five percent of the terminations were for school-related problems and 22 percent were the result of poor performance, attitudes, or behavior at the work site. Only six percent of the terminations were school dropouts. About half of the terminations were negative, i.e., the result of the inability of a trainee to successfully cope with the school and work experience. These negative terminations involved 14 percent of all T.S.E.C. students served in 1983-84.

Twenty percent of the terminations were positive. Ten percent of the students (7) graduated with diplomas. An additional ten percent obtained other full or part-time jobs.

Table 4

Number, Percentage and Mean Age of 1983-84 TOP
Special Education Trainees with Different Handicapping Conditions

Handicapping Condition	Number of Trainees	Percent	Mean Age
Brain Injured	26	15	17.7
Cerebral Palsy	3	2	18.0
Educable Mentally Retarded	1	0	17.0
Emotionally Handicapped	25	14	18.1
Hard of Hearing	19	11	18.5
Language Impaired	8	5	18.3
Learning Disabled	43	25	17.7
Mentally Retarded	36	21	19.2
Minimal Brain Dysfunction	3	2	19.7
Neurologically Impaired Emotionally Handicapped	6	3	18.8
Physically Handicapped	3	2	18.3
Visually Limited	1	0	17.0
TOTAL	174	100	18.2 (mean)

Note: Table Information Based on Enrollment date as of May 8, 1984.
Deaf (included in Hard of Hearing) = 7 (4.0%).
Multiply Handicapped = 12 (6.9%).

° About three quarters of T.S.E.C. trainees fall into four categories:
Learning Disabled, Mentally Retarded, Brain Injured, and Emotionally
Handicapped.

Table 5

**Training Areas of TOP Special Education Participants, 1983-84,
Number of Trainees By Handicapping Condition**

	Technical Health Services	Patient Care/ Recreation	Office Clr	Svcs* Off	Kitchen/ Housekeep/ Laundry	Mallroom/ Messenger	Stockroom/ Shipping	Printing/ Graphics/ Video	Animal Care/ Gardening	Maintenance	TOTAL
Brain Injured	3		11	4		1	3	1	1	2	26
Cerebral Palsy		1	2	1							4
Emotional Hand.	2	2	9	7		1	1	1	1	1	25
Educ. Men. Ret.			1								1
Hard of Hearing	1		6	2	1	4	3	1		1	19
Learning Disabled	6	7	14	7		4	2	2	1		43
Lang. Impaired	1		1	1		1	3	1			8
Min. Brain Dys.				1						2	3
Mentally Ret.	1	11		4	11		3			6	36
Neuro. Impaired Emotional Hand.			4							1	5
Physical Hand.			3								3
Visual Impaired						1					1
TOTAL	14	21	51	27	12	12	15	6	3	13	174

* Clr = General Clerical Aide: filing, xeroxing, typing and other higher level office tasks performed
Off = General Office Aide: xeroxing, collating, some filing stamping and stuffing envelopes are major job tasks.

* The largest cluster of trainees were in office service as either clerical or office aides.

Table 6

Number and Percentage of 1983-84 Placement Site Terminations
for TOP Special Education Component

Reasons for Termination	Number	Percent
Student Mugged, Quit Job	1	1
Moved Out of City	3	4
School Related Problems	17	25
Poor Work Performance/ Attitude/Behavior	15	22
Poor Health/Medical	1	1
Pregnancy	1	1
Participation in Other School Activities	5	7
Left School to Adult Program at Age 21	9	13
Graduated With Diploma	7	10
Obtained Other Part or Full Time Job	7	10
Dropped Out of School	4	6
TOTAL	70	100

Note: Students who were reassigned from one site to another were not counted as terminations.

* Twenty percent of the terminations were positive, i.e. 10 percent graduate with diploma's and 10 percent obtained other full or part-time jobs.

* Half of the terminations were negative, i.e. 25 percent for school related problems, 22 percent for inability to cope with work experience and only six percent were school dropouts.

II. EVALUATION DESIGN

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The evaluation of the 1983-84 TOP special education component had three primary objectives. They were:

1. To compile a descriptive analysis of the TOP special education component.
2. To examine the process of matching and placing students with training sites and the suitability of training plans.
3. To compile a series of case studies to document the training experience of selected students.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OBJECTIVE

Interviews

A series of interviews and a review of documents were used as the basis for the descriptive analysis. Interviews were conducted with the coordinator, assistant coordinator, and selected staff of the Placement and Referral Center for the Handicapped and the coordinator of the TOP special education component. The interviews were focused on the history, background, goals, objectives, and service activities with clients of the Center. The interviews with the TOP coordinator were focused on the recruitment, selection, matching, and placement of trainees, training plans and trainee performance, and trainee and site monitoring. Another purpose of the interviews was to identify any changes or modifications that were made in the regular TOP model to accommodate the needs of special education trainees.

Placement and Referral Center documents such as program descriptions, training materials, and statistical reports were reviewed to obtain a thorough understanding of the Center's operations. T.S.E.C. documents such as

trainee and employer files, case notes, training plans, monitoring reports, and other administrative and statistical records were also reviewed. The T.S.E.C. documents were reviewed in order to gain a better understanding of staff administrative activities, the types of students and employers who participated in the program during 1983-84, trainee matching and placement, training plans, and trainee and site monitoring.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were developed by the Office of Educational Assessment and administered to the 42 TOP trainees in the evaluation sample and their 32 employers. The trainees were given in person interviews. The trainee questionnaire (Trainee Interview Guide, Appendix D) addressed matching and placement, training plans, employability skills, program benefits, and trainee recommendations. Instructions for conducting and coding the interviews were also developed to insure that the special education trainees clearly understood what they were being asked.

The employer sample was interviewed by telephone. The questionnaire that was developed for employers focused on the matching and placement process, trainee performance on the job site, program benefits for employers, and employer recommendations (See Appendices E and F).

The trainee interviews were conducted between late June and early July, 1984. The employer telephone interviews were conducted during July and August, 1984.

MATCHING AND PLACEMENT OBJECTIVE

The examination of the matching and placement process was based on an analysis of the responses to matching and placement items on the trainee and

employer questionnaires. In addition, interviews were conducted with T.S.E.C. and school based staff, and pertinent documents, particularly training plans, were reviewed.

CASE STUDIES OBJECTIVE

Eight students were selected for a preliminary case study review. The review process included: (1) an overview of the educational history, (2) an analysis of prior work experience history, (3) future plans, and (4) benefits gained from the Program. Telephone and in-person interviews were conducted with Placement and Referral Center, T.S.E.C., and school-based staff, as well as with selected employers. Documents such as trainee and employer files, case notes, and assessment information were also reviewed.

THE EVALUATION SAMPLE

The evaluation team used a stratified sample comprising approximately 20 percent of the total T.S.E.C. enrollment which was representative of the handicapping conditions found among TOP trainees. A random sample was taken within each handicapping classification so that the percentage of trainees in the sample in specific classifications approximated the percentage of students with that handicapping condition in the total T.S.E.C. enrollment. Table 7 shows the number and percentage of sampled students in each handicapping condition as well as the percentage of students in that handicapping condition within the T.S.E.C.

Table 7
Number and Percentages of Students with Different
Handicapping Conditions in 1983-84 TOP
Evaluation Sample

Classification	Number of Students in Sample	Percent of Students in Sample	Percent in TSEC
Brain Injured	6	15	15
Cerebral Palsy	1	2	2
Educable Mentally Retarded	1	2	1
Emotionally Handicapped	6	15	14
Hard of Hearing	4	10	11
Language Impaired	1	2	4
Learning Disabled	11	26	24
Mentally Retarded	8	20	21
Minimal Brain Dysfunction	1	2	2
Neurologically Impaired Emotionally Handicapped	1	2	3
Physically Handicapped	1	2	3
Visually Limited	1	2	1
TOTAL	42	100.0	

° The T.S.E.C. evaluation sample was a stratified sample comprising 20 percent of the T.S.E.C. trainee population.

III. FINDINGS

TRAINEE BACKGROUND

Eighty-three percent of the 42 trainees in the evaluation sample attended academic high schools. The remaining 17 percent attended public vocational schools and occupational training centers or were enrolled in private schools which provided specialized services. Table 8 presents a profile of the T.S.E.C. evaluation sample according to students racial/ethnic background, age, sex, and years in TOP. Thirty-one percent of the trainees were female and 69 percent were male. Sixty-four percent of the trainees were Black, 19 percent were Hispanic, 14 percent were Caucasian, and three percent were Asian/Indian.

The mean age of the students in the sample was 19.4 years. Forty-three percent of the trainees were 19 years of age, 24 percent were 18, and 12 percent were 20 years old. Seven percent of the group was 21 years old and in their last year of eligibility for public school sponsored services. Twenty students, over 48 percent of the group, had been enrolled in the TOP for more than 12 months. Of this number, 22 percent were in their second year of the program and 26 percent had been in the TOP since its inception three years ago.

OCCUPATIONAL AREAS AND JOB TASKS

Tables 9 and 10 shows the occupational areas and job tasks in which TOP trainees worked. TOP trainees within the sample worked in nine occupational areas, mostly in health services (38 percent) or office services (31 percent). The trainees performed a variety of tasks at their placement sites. Sixty percent performed some type of sorting, filing, or clerical work, and about

Table 8
Profile of 1983-84 T.S.E.C. Trainee Evaluation Sample

	Category	Percent of Students
Racial/Ethnic Background	Asian/Indian	2
	Black	64
	Hispanic	19
	Caucasian	14
	Total	100

	Age	Percent of Students
Age	16	5
	17	9
	18	24
	19	43
	20	12
	21	7
	Total	100

	Sex	Percent of Students
Sex	Female	31.0
	Male	69.0
	Total	100.0

	Years in TOP	Percent of Students
Years in TOP	1	52
	2	22
	3 or more	26
	Total	100.0

° Almost half of the T.S.E.C. trainees in the sample had been enrolled in the T.S.E.C. for one year.

Table 9
Occupational Areas of 1983-84 TOP
Trainee Evaluation Sample

Occupational Area	Number of Trainees	Percent
Agricultural Services	1	2
Educational Services College/University	1	2
Educational Services NYC Board of Ed.	4	10
Health Services	16	38
Horticulture Services	1	2
Human Services	3	8
Messenger Services	2	5
Office Services	13	31
Recreation Services	1	2
TOTAL	42	100.0

° T.S.E.C. trainees mostly worked in health services (38 percent) on office services (31 percent).

Table 10
Job Tasks Performed by Trainees in the Evaluation Sample

Task	Number of Trainees	Percent
Answering Telephone	7	17
Data Entry (Computer)	7	17
Filing/Sorting/Clerical	25	60
Gardening/Landscaping	1	2
Mailing (prepare and stuff envelopes)	8	19
Mailroom	3	7
Maintenance/Laundry/Housekeeping	5	12
Medical Lab Assistant	1	2
Messenger	11	26
Patient Escort	4	9
Patient/Nurse's Aide	6	14
Stockroom Work	1	2
Typing	6	14
Waiter/Waitress	1	2
Word Processor Operation	1	2
Xeroxing/Duplicating	7	17

° Sixty percent of T.S.E.C. trainees performed some type of sorting, filing or clerical work, and approximately one quarter performed messenger tasks.

one quarter performed messenger tasks.

TRAINEE JOB SATISFACTION

The trainees were divided, 50 percent each, as to whether or not the job tasks they performed were related to their career interests. Ten percent of the students said they had a copy of their training plan.

Ninety-five percent of the trainees said there was someone on the job who told them what to do. Sixty-nine percent indicated they received supervisory direction daily, five percent received it weekly, and 26 percent received directions as needed. Seventy-six percent of the students said they were assigned, 17 percent were supervised by persons who performed functions similar to those performed by the trainee, and two percent by persons who performed different functions. Five percent were not sure what their supervisor did.

Eighty-eight percent of the trainees were satisfied with their jobs and training placements. Trainees who were not satisfied with their placements said that the jobs were not challenging or related to their work interests. Twenty-six percent of the trainees said they had experienced problems on the job and cited disagreements with co-workers and problems in the supervisory relationship as the reasons difficulties occurred.

MEETINGS AND DISCUSSIONS WITH THE TOP COORDINATOR

Nineteen percent of trainees (8) said they had never attended meetings with the TOP coordinator. The remainder of the group met an average of 4.4 times during the year. The most helpful topics of discussion with the TOP coordinator were responsibilities and relationships on the job, dress codes,

and punctuality. Other topics that were discussed included attendance, the job application process, progress and problems on the job, proper behavior, and wages.

TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT USED

One student used word processing equipment extensively and six others used computer terminals regularly or sporadically for data entry. The majority of the students, however, used basic office equipment, hand utensils, or hand tools.

Forty-three percent of the students used photocopy equipment, 21 percent used a typewriter in their work, and 12 percent used a mix of general office equipment. Trainees who were placed at mailroom sites used postage meters, sorters and scales. Trainees who were in maintenance, laundry, or kitchen aide work, used hand tools, buffing machines, commercial washers and dryers, kitchen utensils, and cleaning equipment.

BENEFITS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Fifty-seven percent of the trainees said they benefitted from the practical work experience the program provided and 38 percent said they learned new skills. Twelve percent cited the job interview skills they learned were beneficial, seven percent felt the strategies they were taught about how to find and obtain a job were important, and five percent said the amount of self-confidence they gained was a primary benefit. An additional five percent felt they gained new information regarding the world of work.

Thirty-eight percent of the trainees did not have any recommendations to make for improving the program. Fourteen percent of the group recommended

more work hours, five percent suggested there should be fewer work hours, and seven percent felt that the work hours should be modified but did not specify how. Twenty percent of the trainees wanted more money and seven percent recommended that more jobs should be related to the trainees' interests. Seven percent of the trainees also recommended that something should be done about people who wasted time (other employees) at the job site.

EMPLOYER BACKGROUND

Supervisors at the 32 work sites where TOP special education trainees were placed were interviewed by telephone. Half of the respondents were overall supervisors who also were the trainees' immediate superiors.

Seventy-five percent (24) of the training sites were located at public agencies, 22 percent were at private-non-profit agencies, and three percent (1) was a private sector firm. The primary activity conducted at 75 percent of the sites was the provision of some type of office services. Nine percent (3) were hospital/food service sites. Nine percent were supply/sales/mail-room sites, and six percent (2) provided building maintenance/groundskeeping/gardening services.

EMPLOYER ASSESSMENT OF TRAINEE SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE

Table 11 presents employer ratings of TOP trainees. Eighty-eight to 100 percent of the overall and indirect line supervisors rated trainee ability to learn work tasks, work habits, attitude towards co-workers, and interest in the job as adequate or better than adequate. Eighty-eight percent of the overall supervisors and 81 percent of the direct line supervisors rated

trainees' attitude toward their work tasks as adequate or better. The two supervisory groups differed significantly in their ratings of trainee academic skills. Eighty-eight percent of the direct line supervisors rated academic skills as adequate or better, but only 69 percent of the overall supervisors gave trainee academic skills a similar rating. Both supervisory groups gave their lowest ratings to trainees' prior occupational/vocational experience. This trainee characteristic was rated adequate or better by 50 percent of the overall supervisors and 75 percent of the direct line supervisors.

TRAINING PLANS AND TOP STAFF CONTACTS

Eighty-two percent of the direct line supervisors and 81 percent of the overall supervisors had training plans for trainees that were developed by TOP or training site (agency) staff. Six supervisors (19 percent) stated that they did not have a copy of the training plan. Twelve supervisors felt the training plans were very realistic, two employers (7 percent) felt the plans were fairly realistic, and one employer felt the plans were unrealistic.

Seventy-eight percent of the overall and direct line supervisors stated they had contacts with the TOP staff over the year. Twenty-three supervisors said they had contacts with TOP staff and 65 percent of this group had 11 or more contacts. Twenty-six percent had contact with TOP staff 11 to 15 times and 36 percent had weekly contacts. Sixteen percent (5) of the direct line supervisors and one overall supervisor said they rarely had contact with TOP staff.

Forty-one percent of the supervisors cited payroll and scheduling problems as the primary topic they discussed with TOP staff and 34 percent

Table 11

Number and Percentage of Supervisors Rating
1983-84 T.S.E.C. Trainees as Adequate or
Better on Different Job Criteria

Criterion	Overall Supervisor	Direct Line Supervisor	Combined Total
Basic Academic Skills	11 (69%)	14 (88%)	25 (78%)
Prior Work Experience	8 (50%)	12 (75%)	20 (63%)
Ability to Learn Work Tasks	14 (88%)	15 (94%)	29 (91%)
Work Habits	14 (88%)	14 (88%)	28 (88%)
Attitude Towards Work Tasks	14 (88%)	13 (81%)	27 (84%)
Attitude Towards Co-Workers	16 (100%)	14 (88%)	30 (94%)
Interest in the Job	14 (88%)	15 (94%)	29 (91%)

° Supervisor ratings of T.S.E.C. trainees were highest on trainees' attitudes towards co-workers, lowest on their prior work experience.

° The largest differences between the opinions of the overall and direct line supervisors were on basic academic skills, and prior work experience.

cited trainee evaluations. Only two of the supervisors said that trainee problems were a primary topic of discussion.

TRAINEE RETENTION AND FUTURE EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION IN TOP

The 16 overall supervisors in the evaluation sample were questioned about whether or not they would retain trainees after the stipend was used up and employers were responsible for paying the full employment costs. Eleven supervisors (69 percent) stated they would like to retain their trainees. Good performance on the job was most often cited as the reason that supervisors wanted to retain trainees. Problems with civil service regulations, school requirements, and a lack of funds were the reasons supervisors gave for not retaining trainees. Only one supervisor indicated any dissatisfaction with a trainee's performance as the reason for not wanting to retain the trainee beyond the period of stipended employment.

Two overall supervisors (13 percent) retained trainees after the stipend had expired. The two trainees, who were retained, were employed full-time and earned between \$3.35 and \$4.00 per hour. One of the trainees was given more responsibility after he was retained full-time.

A majority of the overall supervisors (16) had participated in TOP prior to the 1983-84 program year. Ten supervisors (63 percent) had TOP trainees in 1982-83 and four (25 percent) had trainees in 1981-82. One supervisor served in a work experience site for another program prior to 1981-82. Two supervisors said they had retained trainees in the past. Five supervisors (31 percent) said they also participated in other youth training programs such as S.Y.E.P., Cooperative Education, Neighborhood Youth Corps, and the Mayor's Office for the Handicapped.

Three of the combined overall and direct line supervisors (9 percent) stated they had problems with the way the TOP program was operated in 1983-84. Two supervisors cited excessive paperwork as the problem and the third complained that the work agreement (contract) was not completed when the TOP began.

Eighty-one percent of the 16 overall supervisors said that their agencies would participate in TOP next year and 13 percent (2) were not sure. One supervisor said the agency would not participate in the program next year and cited poor trainee performance as the reason.

Fifty-four percent of the supervisors who said they would participate in TOP next year stated they would continue as a training site because they wanted to help students or for the mutual benefits that were gained. Fifteen percent said they needed the extra help and 15 percent said they would continue because of the quality of the T.S.E.C. trainees.

Eighty-one percent (13) of the supervisors stated that the TOP stipends were an incentive for them to participate in the program. One employer felt the stipends helped motivate students, and another commented that the agency could not afford to pay students from their operating budget.

EMPLOYER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Twenty-eight percent of the supervisors had no suggestions to make and 16 percent had non-specific positive comments. Thirteen percent (4) of the supervisors requested changes in payroll practices such as the distribution of a written schedule for submitting time sheets. Thirteen percent of the supervisors (4) requested more background information or an orientation for trainees and one supervisor wanted more site visits. Other recommendations

Table 12
Disposition of T.S.E.C. Trainees
Who Completed the Program in 1983-84*

Disposition	Number of Trainees	Percent
Referral to Other Agency	31	60
Pregnancy	1	2
Armed Forces	1	2
Paid Employment	10	19
Entered College	9	17
TOTAL	52	100.0

* The 52 trainees who completed the program either attained age 21 and became ineligible for school services or graduated high school in June, 1984.

° Over half of the T.S.E.C. trainees in 1983-84 were referred to another agency upon completing the program.

° One fifth of the trainees found paid employment upon completing the program.

included letting trainees work a full day, operating the program year-round, advertising the program more, providing more trainees, screening out poor or disinterested workers, and completing work agreements sooner.

IV. CASE STUDIES OF TOP TRAINEES

The eight students who were the subjects of the case studies ranged in age from 18 to 21 years old and had been in TOP for a period of one to three years (see Table 13). Six of the eight trainees (75 percent) were scheduled to graduate high school in June, 1984, or had reached age 21 and would be ineligible for school sponsored special education services. Three of the students in this group were subsequently transferred to adult client status at the Placement and Referral Center, where they would be placed in suitable jobs or referred to other agencies for additional services. Two other students were placed in full-time jobs (competitive employment) and the sixth student was scheduled to enter post-secondary training at a proprietary school. The two remaining students in the case study group were planning to return to school in September, 1985.

REFERRAL, MATCHING, AND PLACEMENT

All eight students were referred to TOP from a school-related source such as a work-study coordinator, special education supervisor or counselor, or teacher. A few of the students were known to Center staff prior to their acceptance into TOP. The students were screened, matched, and placed according to their individual capabilities.

TRAINEE BENEFITS

All of the eight trainees said they benefitted from their participation in the program. The two trainees who were entering full-time paid employment after graduation attributed their success in obtaining those jobs to the program.

The other trainees felt they gained valuable work experience and training that would help them in later life. One trainee, who became skilled at using word processing equipment while she was in the program, stated that she had received good training for a possible future career.

TRAINEE PROFILES

Allen

Allen, age 21, has been in TOP for two years and had participated in other work experience programs, often as a volunteer, since 1981. Allen is classified as Mentally Retarded. He has held work experience jobs as a porter and kitchen helper and has been a food preparation trainee since 1982. Allen spent the past two years at a community mental health center training site and was recently transferred to a hospital setting to broaden his experience in different environments. Allen is no longer eligible for school services because of his age, but he will be transferred to the Placement and Referral Center as an adult client. The Center plans to eventually place Allen in a full-time, non-competitive (unsubsidized) kitchen or cafeteria position.

Brian

Brian, age 21, has had two years of participation in work experience programs and has been in TOP for one year, since June, 1983. He was referred to TOP from a school-sponsored career education center. Brian is classified as Learning Disabled. He is a good speaker, but has poorly developed reading and writing skills. Brian was given clerical work aptitude tests, but his scores and actual work skills are not sufficient for him to

do clerical work competitively. Brian also suffers from varicose veins, which severely limit the amount and type of physical work he can perform. Brian was transferred from a training site that involved horticulture work because the strain on his legs caused him serious problems. He was reassigned to a geriatric center as patient aide for the balance of the 1983-84 program year. Brian will be transferred to adult status at the Placement and Referral Center. The Center's employment objective for Brian is to place him in a competitive job that does not require strong reading and writing skills or refer him for additional specialized employment training.

Charles

Charles, age 19, is Learning Disabled. He was referred to TOP from a specialized private school used by the Board of Education. Charles has had three years of experience in various youth training programs and joined TOP in October, 1983. He was placed at a hospital training site as a patient escort the following month. Charles is personable and well spoken, but has poorly developed reading and writing skills. Charles worked well with the older patients at the hospital site and was provided a variety of learning experiences, such as recreation aide, in addition to his escort duties. His primary work responsibilities consisted of assisting regular staff in transferring patients, and transporting patients to other hospital areas for tests or special procedures. Charles' anticipated graduation date was June, 1984, and he was to be transferred to adult client status at the Placement and Referral Center.

Charles' disability is characterized by a mixture of organic and emotional considerations. He can follow simple instructions and has the right person-

ality traits for tasks such as patient care, but he is not flexible in new or different situations. The Center's objective for Charles is placement in a full-time competitive position.

David

David, age 19, is classified as Brain Injured. He has been in the TOP for two years and was expected to graduate high school in June, 1984. David has a troubled and unsettled home life. He has a brother at home who is a released mental patient and tends to be very disruptive, and his family is very poor. David was placed at a training site where he learned horticultural skills. The training site staff exposed David to a wide range of tasks.

David was recommended for work experience because of his poor school record and lack of interest in school. The TOP staff felt that he was capable of performing mailroom/messenger tasks, but would do better in a different work setting. David was placed at a botanical site and showed an interest and ability in horticulture. When David graduates from high school in June, 1984, he will begin a full-time job in a large florist shop. He said that everything he learned about horticulture was the result of the efforts of the staff at his TOP training site.

Evan

Evan, age 20, is classified as Emotionally Handicapped and had a prior history of teenage alcohol abuse. He has been in the TOP program for one year, but prior to 1983 spent two years in other work experience programs. Evan's school record was extremely poor. His academic skills measured nearly five years below grade and he was a chronic truant. Evan was placed at a medical clinic training site, prior to entering TOP, through

another work experience program. He was referred to TOP by his special education teacher when the other work experience program lost its funding. The T.S.E.C. staff decided to continue Evan at the medical clinic site as a TOP trainee. Evan received excellent evaluations and extensive praise from his supervisor at the training site and the esteem has given his ego a much needed boost. He is a member of Alcoholics Anonymous and when he graduates high school in June, 1984, he will enter full-time, paid employment at his former training site, the medical clinic.

Fiona

Fiona, age 20, is classified as Mentally Retarded. She participated in the Summer Youth Employment Program (S.Y.E.P.) for four years prior to joining TOP in 1982. Fiona is a strong sixth grade level reading and math student and a highly motivated, responsible, and goal directed individual. She feels that she has had two successful years in TOP. She was placed in a large office setting as a word processor trainee. She learned to store, retrieve, and manipulate data, as well as use statistical tables.

Fiona has passed the Regents Competency Tests and is scheduled to graduate high school in June, 1984. She intends to pursue post-secondary training as a medical technician. Fiona's progress within the TOP program was considered exceptional by her site supervisor. A number of educators who have been involved with Fiona question whether or not she was properly classified.

Grace

Grace, age 20, is classified as Emotionally Handicapped and is enrolled in a special hospital school for youth with alcohol or drug related problems.

She has a young child and resides with her older sister. Grace has had three years of work experience in various programs and has been in TOP for two years. As a TOP trainee, she was placed at training sites where the emphasis was on computer equipment training. She has learned to input, retrieve, and manipulate information and has mastered three models of the Wang word processor. Grace's work habits have improved along with her work skills, but she continues to need to work on her attitudes towards work tasks and authority figures, and accepting responsibility. Grace will continue to attend the special school during 1984-85 and participate in TOP as well. Her objectives for 1984-85 are to prepare for the G.E.D. and gain additional work experience.

Harold

Harold, age 18, is classified as Learning Disabled and Emotionally Handicapped. He is in the 11th grade and studies printing and graphic arts. He has had two summers of S.Y.E.P. program experience as a mailroom aide and printing aide and is in his first year as a TOP trainee. He has had training in camera work, platemaking, offset printing and stripping at school. He has learned to use postage meter scales, heavy volume duplicating machines, and an addressograph. Harold also recieved mailroom/messenger and general clerical skills training at the Placement and Referral Center. Harold was assigned to a large public agency as a graphics aide in December, 1983. The evaluations of his performance as a trainee have been good. He will return to school in September, 1984, and hopefully participate in TOP for another year.

TRAINEES WHO COMPLETED THE PROGRAM IN 1983-84

Fifty-two trainees completed TOP in 1983-84. These students either attained age 21 and became ineligible for school services or graduated high school in June, 1984. Approximately 60 percent of this group were referred to other agencies such as the New York State Office of Vocational Rehabilitation for additional services. One student became pregnant and another joined the armed forces. Nineteen percent entered competitive (paid) employment and 17 percent entered college (See Table 13).

Table 13
Demographic Profile of Trainees in Case Studies

		Female	Male	Total
Race and Sex	Black	2	2	4
	Hispanic		1	1
	White		3	3
	Total	2	6	8
		Number of Students		
Type of School Attended	School Type			
	Academic/Comp	4		
	Vocational	1		
	Private	1		
	Other	1		
	Total	8		
		Number of Students		
Handicapping Condition	Classification			
	Brain Injured	1		
	Emotionally Handicapped	2		
	Learning Disabled	3		
	Mentally Retarded	2		
	Total	8		
		Number of Students		
Age	Age			
	18	1		
	19	1		
	20	3		
	21	3		
	Total	8		
		Number of Students		
Educational Status	Category			
	Diploma	3		
	Non-Diploma	5		
	Total	8		
		Number of Students		
Future Plans	Disposition			
	Adult Client Status	3		
	Further Training	1		
	Return to School	2		
	Entered Paid Employment	2		
	Total	8		

° Based on modal category membership, the typical case study T.S.E.C. trainee was a black male classified as Learning Disabled, attending an academic high school, and in a non-degree program.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The TOP Special Education Component Program operations are conducted by a coordinator and two paraprofessionals who feel that the current staff is adequate as long as the caseload does not exceed 200 trainees. The TOP staff utilizes the existing network of regular and special education teachers, counselors, supervisors, and related agencies in the recruitment process. Selected TOP trainees are given portions of the Adkins Life Skills Program when staff believe this pre-employment skills training is appropriate. The TOP coordinator felt that all of the trainees could benefit from specific Adkins units and some trainees needed the entire program.

The TOP staff use a variety of forms and documents in the matching, placement, and monitoring processes. These materials are adequate for program operations purposes, but would not be sufficient if the Work Experience Unit wanted to conduct additional internal research or compile a descriptive report that would be suitable for dissemination.

The majority of the trainees and employers who were interviewed for the evaluation, were satisfied with the matching and placement process. Eighty-eight percent of the trainees were satisfied with their placements and 78 to 94 percent of the employers rated their trainees' academic skills, ability to learn work tasks, work habits, attitudes towards work tasks and co-workers, and interest in the job as adequate or better. Fifteen trainees were terminated because of problems encountered on-the-job. However, only two supervisors mentioned they had on the job problems with trainees.

All of the trainees felt they benefitted from participation in the program and cited the practical work experience, new skills, and job seeking

strategies learned as their primary gains. Trainee recommendations to improve the program focused on modifying work hours and getting more pay.

Training site supervisors (employers) were supportive of the program. Forty-four percent had no recommendations to make or simply wanted the program to "keep up the good work". Other supervisors recommended changes in payroll practices. Eighty-one percent of the supervisors said their agencies would continue to participate in the program and that the trainee stipend was an incentive for their agency to continue as a training site. The supervisors also linked the benefits to students and the mutual benefits gained to their interest in program participation.

Program procedures and schedules related to employer contacts may need to be reviewed and tightened. A number of employers said they did not have training plans or had not had many contacts with program staff. If this occurred because another person at the training site had the plan or made the program contacts, the problem is one of inadequate communication among training site personnel. If, on the other hand, the TOP staff contacts with training sites has been uneven, procedures and scheduling may need to be tightened.

A few supervisors requested additional background information on trainees. This is a sensitive area, and it is not always in the trainee's best interests to give supervisors extensive information routinely. Employers should be as well informed about their trainees as sound professional judgment allows, and this is usually approached on a case by case basis. If more TOP employers indicate they have concerns in this area, they should be addressed, but only in relation to what is in the best interests of the trainee.

The majority of the TOP special education training sites were located at public or private-non-profit agencies. Only two of the 96 sites used in 1983-84 were private sector firms. The participation of private sector employers in the program needs to be increased. If an unwieldy contract (work agreement) contributes to this problem as some staff claim, the contract could be reviewed and, where possible, simplified. In addition, the TOP Central Office staff might explore the possibility of obtaining additional assistance from within the Work Experience Unit to develop training sites for the handicapped.

The TOP special education component is integrated into the range of services the Placement and Referral Center for the Handicapped provides to New York City high school students. As a result of the discontinuance of a number of Federally supported work experience programs for school age youth, TOP is the only stipend earning work experience program available for handicapped youth in the school system. Special education trainees may spend from one to three years in the project, as opposed to regular TOP trainees, who are limited to one year of participation. The special education component of TOP has been extensively modified to meet the needs of special education trainees. The modifications appear to be both educationally and programmatically sound.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The procedures for assigning TOP trainees to Adkins pre-employment skills training should be reviewed to determine if the needs of all trainees who could benefit from such training are being met.
2. Procedure and scheduling regarding training plans at training sites and employer contacts should be reviewed and, if necessary, tightened, so that trainees and employers have access to training plans.
3. A concerted effort should be made to develop private sector training sites for TOP special education component. The contract (work agreement) should be reviewed to determine whether it is a hinderance to private sector employers and if so, it should be modified wherever this is feasible.
4. Procedures regarding the amount and type of information employers are given about trainees should be reviewed if more employers express concern or interest in more information on trainees.

Appendix A

Schools Attended by 1983-84 TOP
Special Education TraineesBRONX

Adlai E. Stevenson	2
DeWitt Clinton	2
Evander Childs	1
Harry S. Truman	2
Herbert H. Lehman	1
James Monroe	1
John F. Kennedy	2
Samuel Gompers	1
South Bronx	1
Theodore Roosevelt	3
Walton	4
William H. Taft	2
Bronx Occupational	
Training Center	6
North Central Bronx	
Hospital	1
	29

MANHATTAN

George Washington	1
Fashion Industries	2
Louis D. Brandeis	1
Martin Luther King	3
Manhattan Vocational	1
Murray Bergtraum	3
N.Y. School of Printing	2
Norman Thomas	3
Seward Park	2
School for Language	
and Hearing Impaired	
Children	10
Manhattan Career	
Development Center	1
Manhattan Occupational	
Training Center	5
Marta Valle	1
P.S. 162	3
J.H.S. 47	3
Livingston (non-public)	2
	43

BROOKLYN

Abraham Lincoln	1
Boys and Girls	2
Bushwick	1
Canarsie	2
Eastern District	1
Edward R. Murrow	2
Erasmus Hall	1
Fort Hamilton	1
Franklin K. Lane	6
George Westinghouse	2
George Wingate	2
James Madison	3
John Dewey	1
Lafayette	1
Prospect Heights	1
Samuel J. Tilden	1
Sarah J. Hale	2
South Shore	2
Thomas Jefferson	1
East New York	1
Eli Whitney	3
Maxwell	1
Sterling	2
Automotive School	
for Language and	
Hearing Impaired	
Children	4
Brooklyn Career	
Education center	6
Educational Voca-	
tional Rehabilitation	1
Brooklyn Occupational	
Training Center	4
Clara Barton	1
	56

QUEENS

Andrew Jackson	3
Far Rockaway	1
Jamaica	2
John Bowne	1
Springfield Gardens	1
William C. Bryant	1
Queens Career	
Education Center	1
Queens Occupational	
Training Center	6
Queens School for	
Career Development	2
Rockaway Occupational	
Training Center	4
	22

STATEN ISLAND

Curtis	3
New Dorp	1
Port Richmond	1
Ralph McKee	2
Tottenville	3
Richmond Occupational	
Training Center	7
Susan B. Wagner	4
Lorge (non-public)	3
	24

NEW YORK CITY BOROUGH TOTALS

Brooklyn	56
Bronx	29
Manhattan	43
Queens	22
Staten Island	24
	174

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES OF TOP COORDINATORS

1. Recruiting TOP trainees based on entry criteria.
2. Administering the Comprehensive Occupational Assessment and Training System (COATS)* Job Matching Preference/ Experience Assessment to TOP trainees.
3. Conducting employability skills workshops with TOP trainees.
4. Conducting orientation sessions for TOP trainees.
5. Matching participants to training sites.
6. Referring trainees to training sites.
7. Completing and submitting monitoring reports assessing trainees' skill acquisition, on site attendance, and punctuality, quality of supervision, training and environment provided...TOP Training Agreement and Plan.
8. Assisting in the development and completion of participants' Training Plans with training site supervisor and appropriate school personnel.
9. Coordinating all site transfers of TOP trainees.
10. Maintaining and updating site logs for each training site assigned.
11. Competing trainees' site evaluation (with) site supervisor.
12. Compiling and transmitting necessary forms and information for participants' payroll processing.
13. Reporting trainees' accumulated work time, and all subsequent follow-up on payroll problems in an accurate and timely manner.
14. Monitoring participants' school attendance and academic performance.
15. Assisting in the provision of school and project-based supportive services referrals for TOP trainees.
16. Acting as liaison between central program staff and the school.

* Published by PREP Inc., Educational Technologies, 1978

17. Recording academic credit on trainees' permanent records.
18. Submitting reports to program staff.
19. Attending program meetings as directed by the program coordinator.
20. Performing other duties as may be assigned.



NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OFFICE OF OCCUPATIONAL AND CAREER EDUCATION
WORK EXPERIENCE UNIT

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM
198 FORSYTH STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10002
677-1174 677-0774

APPENDIX C
PLACEMENT AND REFERRAL CENTER
FOR THE HANDICAPPED
P. O. 112, 100 Attorney Street
New York, N.Y. 10002
(212) 607-1111

TOP STUDENT EVALUATION

NAME _____ TERM ENDING _____
LAST FIRST

SCHOOL _____ DATE TRAINING BEGAN _____

TRAINING SITE _____

ADDRESS _____

SUPERVISOR _____ PHONE _____

PLEASE RATE THE CATEGORIES LISTED BELOW ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING SCALE:

5 = Exceptional; 4 = Above Average; 3 = Average; 2 = Below Average; 1 = Failing

ATTITUDES

PERFORMANCE

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Attendance | _____ | 6. Quality of Work Performed | _____ |
| 2. Punctuality | _____ | 7. Ability to Follow Instructions | _____ |
| 3. Reliability | _____ | 8. Initiative | _____ |
| 4. Interpersonal Relations | _____ | 9. Skills Acquired* | _____ |
| 5. Interest in Training | _____ | 10. Growth on the Job | _____ |

TOTAL ALL CATEGORIES: _____

Please Briefly Outline Skills Mastered by Student:

Completed by : _____
Supervisor's Signature Title Date Completed

Student's Signature

* As Noted in the TOP Training Plan

TABLE FOR INTERPRETATION OF STUDENT EVALUATION

Total of "10" Items on Evaluation	Student's Mark
50	100
48 - 49	98
46 - 47	96
44 - 45	94
42 - 43	92
40 - 41	90
37 - 39	85
34 - 36	80
30 - 33	75
26 - 29	70
24 - 25	65*
19 - 23	60
15 - 18	55
10 - 14	50

* Minimum Passing Grade

T.O.P. Special Education Trainee Interview Guide

APPENDIX D

Background Information

Trainee Name: _____ Date of Interview: _____
 School Name: _____ Age: _____ Sex: F M
 Race/Ethnic Group: _____ Date Training Started: _____
 Special Education Classification: _____ Diploma Non-Diploma
 Number of Years in Work Experience Programs _____ # Yrs at school _____
 Company Name and Address: _____

 Occupational Area: _____
 Public Agency _____ Private Non-Profit _____ Private For Profit _____
 Company Trainer Name: _____

Introduction:

Hello (trainee's name). My name is _____. I am conducting an evaluation of the TOP program for the Office of Educational Evaluation of the New York City Board of Education. I am meeting with you and other students to learn how you feel about TOP and the work you have been doing at (company name). The information we get from students will be included in a report, but your names will not be used. I would appreciate it if you would be as frank as possible in your answers, but you should not answer a question if you don't want to.

Matching and Placement

1. What type of work would you like to do after you are all finished with school?

2. What is your major? (diploma track only) _____
3. Describe the things you do (tasks) on your job at (company name) _____

4. Is the work you do on your job like the work you want to do after you are all finished with school?

Yes _____ No _____

- B. How is your TOP job (placement) like/unlike the work you want to do after you are all finished with school?

Training Plan/Employability Skills

5. How many times have you talked about the work you do on the job since you started the program?

With the TOP Special Education Coordinator _____

With the Company Supervisor or Trainer _____

6. Do you have a copy of the list of things (training plan) you are supposed to do on the job?

Yes _____ No _____

- B. Is there someone on the job who tells you what to do?

Yes _____ No _____

- C. How often does this happen?

- D. What is your supervisor's regular job at the training site?

7. Are you satisfied with the training you get at (company name)?

Yes _____ No _____

NOTE: If the answer to question 7 is No, ask question 8 B.

B. What are you dissatisfied with?

8. Have you ever had any problems at the job?

Yes _____ No _____

NOTE: If the answer to question 8 is Yes, ask question 8 B.

B. Describe the problems you have had at the job.

9. How many meetings have you attended where things like how to act on the job were talked about?

B. What things were talked about that were helpful to you?

C. What other things should be talked about in the meetings?

10. Has the TOP special education coordinator (mention coordinator's name) ever talked to you about the job or problems on the job?

Yes _____ No _____

B. What things about the job has (coordinator name) talked about with you?

11. What tools or equipment do you use on the job?

- Program Benefits and Recommendations

12. What have you gained from the TOP program?

13. What changes would you make to improve the TOP program?

TOP EMPLOYERS TELEPHONE SURVEY: OVERALL SUPERVISOR

INTRODUCTION: Hello. My name is _____. I am conducting an independent evaluation of the Training Opportunities Program--TOP--for the Office of Educational Evaluation of the Board of Education. Do you have a minute? Am I correct that you are the person in charge overall of training for your company/agency? for example, deciding whether to keep trainees on as regular employees? deciding whether to participate in TOP in future years? YES NO

IF "NO": Who is that person and how do I get in touch with him/her?

NOW GO ON TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE: Explain that all responses will be kept anonymous, that the questionnaire takes about ten minutes; and that some of the questions are multiple choice and some open ended.

Name of Company: _____

Name of Person Interviewed: _____

Position and Title: _____

Private: _____

Private Non-profit: _____

Public: _____

Date of Interview: _____

OVERALL SUPERVISOR QUESTIONNAIRE

PAGE 1

(1.) What was the trainee's first name, so that I can refer to him or her in the questions I'm about to ask you? _____

(2.) What does your company/agency do (Where the training takes place)?

(3.) What did _____ do as a job at your company/agency?

4. Which of the following choices best describes how much supervision your trainee got compared to your regular employees. Did _____ get:

_____ MORE
_____ THE SAME AMOUNT
_____ LESS supervision than regular employees?

5. Have you kept any of this year's trainees as regular employees of your company/agency after TOP stipend ran out? YES NO
Have you kept _____ as a regular employee? YES NO

Would you like to have kept _____ as a regular employee? Why?

IF "NO": GO TO QUESTION #7

IF "YES": Did he or she work: FULL TIME? PART TIME?

6. Now I want to find out some things about _____'s job since the stipend ran out.

Is _____ working MORE, FEWER, or the SAME hours?
How many hours? _____

Is _____ getting MORE, LESS, or the SAME pay? Current hourly wage? _____

Does _____ have MORE, LESS, or the SAME responsibility?
What are _____'s current responsibilities? _____

7. Did you take on any TOP trainees before Sept., 1983? YES NO

IF "NO": GO TO QUESTION #9

IF "YES": In which of the following years:

Sept. 82-Sept. 83	YES	NO
Sept. 81-Sept. 82	YES	NO
Earlier	YES	NO

8. Are any of these trainees now with your firm as regular employees?

YES NO

- (9.) Now I want to get a sense of how well _____'s background fits with your company/agency's requirements for an entry level job. The choices I'm going to give you are: "not adequate", "adequate", and "better than adequate".

Were _____'s Basic Academic Skills:

NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

Was _____'s occupational/vocational experience before coming to your company/agency:

NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

- (10.) Here's another question using those same "adequate" choices: How was _____'s:

Ability to learn work tasks:

NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

Work habits:

NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

Attitude toward work tasks:

NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

Attitude toward co-workers:

NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

Interest in his/her job:

NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

11. Do you plan to participate in the TOP program again next year?
 YES NO DON'T KNOW

WHY/WHY NOT? _____

(12.) Were you given any kind of written plan or program by people from TOP concerning the job training that _____ receives at your company/agency? YES NO

IF "YES": GO TO QUESTION #13

IF "NO": Then, did you have your own company plan for training? for _____ and what was that plan?

(13.) Which of the following three choices best describes how that plan/program was developed?

- _____ You developed it in cooperation with TOP staff
- _____ TOP developed it and gave it to you to use
- _____ You developed it yourself.

(14.) How realistic is the training plan as a description of what actually happens to _____ under your supervision?
Here are four choices:

- _____ Very realistic
- _____ Fairly realistic
- _____ Not very realistic
- _____ Very unrealistic

(15.) Have you had any contact with the TOP Central Office?

YES NO (IF "NO", GO TO #17)

IF "YES": How many times did you talk to Central Office people: _____

Would you say your contacts were:

RARE OCCASIONAL FREQUENT

(16.) What was it you discussed with staff from the TOP Central Office?

- (17.) Have you had any contact this past year with the TOP School Coordinator from _____'s high school?

YES NO

IF "NO": GO TO QUESTION #18

IF "YES": How many times? _____

Would you say that your contacts were:

RARE OCCASIONAL FREQUENT

- (18.) What did you discuss with the TOP School Coordinator?

- (19.) Would it have been helpful for you to have had more frequent communication with TOP staff? YES: NO

WHY?/WHY NOT? _____

(20.) Now I'd like to find out if you have had any problems this year with the way the TOP program has been run. Have you had any problems?

YES NO

IF "NO": GO TO QUESTION #21

IF "YES", What were those? _____

(21.) What are your suggestions for improvements that might be made in the training program?

22. Have you noticed any change between the TOP program this year compared to prior years (rate the program, not the trainee): YES NO

IF "YES", what are they? _____

23. Does your company/agency participate in any other youth training programs besides TOP? YES NO

IF "YES": What are their names? _____

24. Do you receive funds for stipends or support for trainees from any other programs besides TOP? YES NO

25. What is the most important reason that you participate in TOP?

26. Are trainee stipends an incentive to participate in TOP? _____

27. Is there anything else that you think I ought to know about, from an employer's viewpoint, concerning the TOP training program?

TOP EMPLOYERS TELEPHONE SURVEY: FIRST LINE/DIRECT SUPERVISOR

INTRODUCTION: Hello. My name is _____. I am conducting an independent evaluation of the Training Opportunities Program--TOP--for the Office of Educational Evaluation of the Board of Education. Do you have a minute? Am I correct that you had a TOP trainee during the 1983-84 school year, the one that just ended? YES NO (If "NO", then end interview.)

If "YES": Were you the direct supervisor of one of the trainees? YES NO

Are you (also) the person in charge of overall training for your company/agency? for example, deciding whether to keep trainees on as regular employees? deciding whether to participate in TOP in future years? YES NO

IF "NO": Who is that person and how do I get in touch with him/her?

NOW GO ON TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE: Explain that all responses will be kept anonymous, that the questionnaire takes about ten minutes; and that some of the questions are multiple choice and some open ended.

Name of Company: _____

Name of Person Interviewed: _____

Position and Title: _____

Private: _____

Private Non-profit: _____

Public: _____

Date of Interview: _____

1. What was the trainee's first name, so that I can refer to him or her in the questions I'm about to ask you? _____

2. What does your company/agency do (where the training takes place)?

3. What did _____ do as a job at your company/agency?

4. Now I want to get a sense of how well _____'s background fits with your company/agency's requirements for an entry level job. The choices I'm going to give you are: "not adequate", "adequate", and "better than adequate".

Were _____'s Basic Academic Skills:

NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

Was _____'s occupational/vocational experience before coming to your company/agency:

NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

5. Here's another question using those same "adequate" choices: How was _____'s:

Ability to learn work tasks:

NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

Work habits:

NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

Attitude toward work tasks:
 NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

Attitude toward co-workers:
 NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

Interest in his/her job:
 NOT ADEQUATE ADEQUATE BETTER THAN ADEQUATE

6. Were you given any kind of written plan or program by people from TOP concerning the job training that _____ received at your company/agency? YES NO

IF "YES": GO TO QUESTION #7

IF "NO": Then, did you have your own company plan for training for _____ and what was that plan?

7. Which of the following three choices best describes how that plan/program was developed?

- _____ You developed it in cooperation with TOP staff.
 _____ TOP developed it and gave it to you to use.
 _____ You developed it yourself.

8. How realistic is the training plan as a description of what actually happens to _____ under your supervision? Here are four choices:

☐ Very realistic
☐ Fairly realistic
☐ Not very realistic
☐ Very unrealistic

9. Have you had any contact with staff from the TOP Central Office?

YES NO (IF "NO", go to #11)

IF "YES": How often? _____ Would you say that your contacts were:

RARE? OCCASIONAL? FREQUENT?

10. What was it that you discussed with staff from the Central Office?

11. Have you had any contact this past year with the TOP School Coordinator from _____'s high school? YES NO

IF "NO": GO TO QUESTION #13

IF "YES": How often? _____ Would you say that your contacts were:

RARE OCCASIONAL FREQUENT

12. What was it that you discussed with the TOP School Coordinator?

13. Would it have been helpful for you to have had more frequent communication with TOP staff? YES NO

WHY?/WHY NOT?

14. Now I'd like to find out if you have any problems this year with the way the TOP program has been run. Have you had any problems?

YES NO

IF "NO": GO TO QUESTION #15

IF "YES", What were those?

15. What are your suggestions for improvements that might be made in the training program?
